

# Master's Project Proposal Format

---

- A. **COMPONENTS OF THE PROPOSAL.** Use *no more than three* double-spaced pages to answer the following questions under separate headings.

## **Central Question (1-3 sentences)**

**Articulate -- in its most distilled, essential, focused form -- the concept at the heart of this proposed project: What question (or issue, or problem) does this project seek to address or analyze?**

- Typically, this takes the form of a concise, analytical, open-ended central research question or falsifiable hypothesis in which something is at issue.
- For a project involving applied research or creative work (including personal writing), provide a brief statement of what the completed project will consist of (e.g., its goal, approach and final form) and what is at issue.

Save all but the most basic definitional explanation for the Context or Method sections. ***Keep this to three sentences or fewer.***

## **Context (2-3 paragraphs)**

**Discuss what is already known about this question, what we might learn from your project and why this is significant.** What background, context or scholarly debate do I need to know? What are some possible answers to your central question? What do you believe is really at issue or at stake in this project?

## **Method (1-2 paragraphs)**

**What is your approach? How will you go about answering this central question or achieving this goal?** Describe the forms and stages of research, writing and other activities involved in your project.

- Many projects take the form of an academic essay based in the scholarly literature (much like an extended class research paper). If you choose this approach, what sort of theories and research materials do you anticipate using, and why?
- If your project involves primary research, what is the research design and how will you evaluate your results? What sort of theories and research materials do you anticipate using, and why?
- If you plan a project involving applied research or creative work, what formats, material, methods or theories do you anticipate using, and why? Will the required written analysis take the form of a separate essay, or will it be integrated into the project in some other way?

## **Preparation (1 paragraph)**

**How have you prepared yourself, through courses, personal or professional background, or other means, for undertaking such a project?** What gives you the experience and authority to undertake such a project? (This is especially important for projects involving creative work or personal writing.)

- B. **PRELIMINARY BIBLIOGRAPHY.** Attached to each draft of your proposal should be a 1-2 page bibliography that indicates what you *anticipate* will be the key sources for your project, and thus demonstrates your awareness of scholarly sources that will be important to your research.

List primary and secondary sources separately, using a standard bibliographic format.